

You are at: [HU Home](#) > [Computing & Technology](#) > [Web](#) >

General Web Policy (Final Draft)

I. Purpose of Policy

This document is intended for use by any member of the Howard University community who is considering using Web-based resources to access, share, or provide information. The intent is to maximize the value of the Internet as a means of communicating with the University's internal and external publics.

Except as noted, the information below applies to official Howard University Web Sites, which are defined as the official Web Pages of University schools, departments, divisions and other administrative and academic units. You may also find within the Howard University domain ("howard.edu") Web Sites over which the University may not have any editorial responsibility or control. Such sites include but are not limited to the Web pages of individual faculty members or students and the Web pages of student organizations and other organizations not formally a part of the University. The University recommends that you seek information from the persons responsible for those Web Sites directly to ensure that you know under what policies and practices they operate.

To the maximum extent possible, this policy does not regulate content beyond what is stated by existing university policies which describe in detail the overall university policies, scope, applicability, responsibilities, and consequences. These policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Howard University Sexual Harassment Policy - <http://www.hr.howard.edu/hrm/policy/SexualHarassment.htm>
- Howard University Student Code of Conduct - http://www.howard.edu/StudentActivities/Code_of_Conduct.html
- Howard University Code of Ethics and Conduct - <http://www.howard.edu/codeofethics.htm>
- Howard University Computer and Network Usage Policy
- Howard University Copyright Policy
- Applicable federal, state and local laws.

II. Definitions

1. Web Page

An individual computer file that is constructed using HTML and it accessible using a Web Browser.

a. Static Web Page

A Web Page that only changes on the Web Server when a Web Publisher edits the Web Page with a text editor such as Notepad or a HTML editor such as FrontPage, or Dreamweaver. Static Web Pages normally have an file extension of htm or html (e.g. contacts.html).

b. Dynamic Web Page

A Web Page that can output different HTML without a Web Publisher editing the Web Page on the Web Server. Dynamic Web Pages can have various file extensions, such as cgi, asp, php, jsp, or cfm (e.g. calendar.asp, feedback.cgi). Dynamic Web Pages are created by executing programming code on the Web Server, which can pull information from various sources such as databases or other Web Pages. However, a Dynamic Web Page will always appear to be static to a visitor's Web Browser.

2. Web Site

In the context of this policy, a Web Site is a collection of Web Pages, images, and any other files that relate to a specific university, college, school, division, department, office, center, program, project, organization, committee, corporation, etc. A Web Site generally has the same navigation and look throughout all its Web Pages and is maintained by a group of people who are responsible for the content and Web Site creation.

3. Home page

A Web Page that acts as the front page to a Web Site. However, it may not be the first page accessed by a visitor.

4. **Web Server**

A computer that provides access to one or more Web Sites using Web formats and protocols. Each server has a main Home Page, although numerous Web Pages or Web Sites are usually directly addressable.

5. **Web Browser**

A computer program that is capable of sending HTTP requests and handling HTTP responses from a Web Server. A Web Browser also has the capability to use HTML to display a Web Page. Web Browsers may also have the capability to display images, and various visual web applets and plug-ins (e.g. Flash, Shockwave, Java). Web Browsers may also have the capability of running non-visual client-side scripts (e.g. JavaScript or VBScript).

6. **Web Publisher**

A person who edits Web Pages, manages Web Sites, and/or edits content from external sources that are used in Web Pages (e.g. databases). This person normally uses a graphical HTML editor such as FrontPage or Dreamweaver, but may use a web-based interface to edit content on a Web Page. This person may also have skills in image design and development for the web.

7. **Web Server Administrator**

A person who is responsible for installation and/or maintenance of a Web Server. Maintenance may include installing software, applying patches to the OS and existing software, securing the Web Server from digital and physical threats, and making performance adjustments.

8. **Official Howard University Web Information, Web Site, Web Publisher, Web Server and Web Server Administrator**

Any text or graphic matter published to a Web Site by a Howard University college, school, division, department, office, center, program, project, organization, or committee is considered "Official Howard University Web Information". Web Sites that solely contain Official Howard University Web Information are considered "Official Howard University Web Sites." The entity that publishes Official Howard University Web Information is considered to be an "Official Web Howard University Publisher." Web Servers owned and operated by Howard University are considered "Official Howard University Web Servers". The entity that manages and maintains an Official Howard University Web Server, that is operated by Howard University, is considered to be an "Official Howard University Web Server Administrator".

9. **Unofficial Web Information, Web Site, Web Publisher, Web Server and Web Servers Administrator**

Any text or graphic matter published by bargaining units, student organizations, and or individual faculty, students, and staff members is considered "Unofficial Web Information", and Web Sites containing unofficial information are considered "Unofficial Web Sites." The individual or organization publishing unofficial information is regarded as an "Unofficial Web Publisher." Web servers not operated by Howard University are considered "Unofficial Web Servers", whether or not they host Official Howard University Web Sites. An entity that manages and maintains an Unofficial Web Server is considered to be an "Unofficial Web Server Administrator".

III. **Howard University World Wide Web Vision & Mission Statements**

Vision Statement

The vision of the Howard University Web Site is to support the core teaching/learning, research and service activities of the University. Through the Web we seek to stimulate interest in the University and project the most highly valued attributes of the University to the global community.

Mission Statement

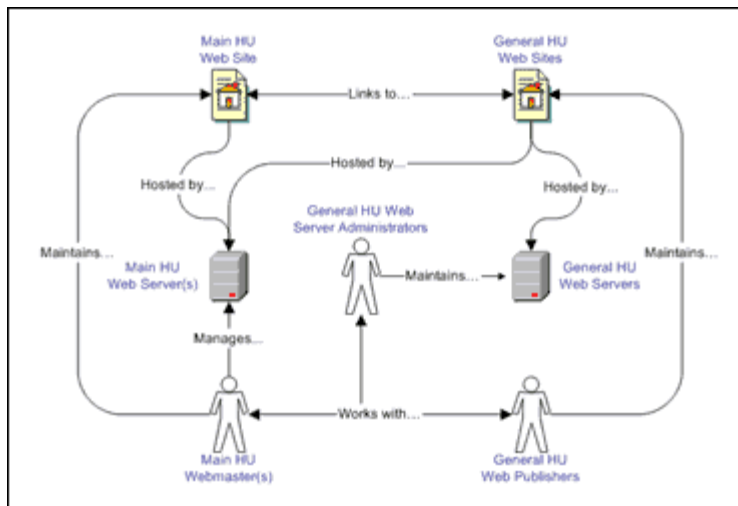
The mission of the Howard University Web Site is to provide current, accurate, and detailed information about the University, its programs, faculty, and students.

IV. **Howard University Web Community Structure**

The Howard University Web Community is consisted of the following roles:

- Main Howard University Web Site
- Main Howard University Webmaster(s)
- Main Howard University Web Server(s)
- General Howard University Web Sites
- General Howard University Web Publishers
- General Howard University Server Administrators
- General Howard University Web Servers

These roles have the following relationship between each other:



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V. General Rights and Responsibilities

Howard University is committed to intellectual and academic freedom and to protecting the rights of students, faculty, and staff to exercise freedom of expression and free academic inquiry and discovery. Individuals must in turn respect the rights of other individuals, respect the integrity of the systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant policies, laws, regulations, and contractual obligations.

VI. Use of Copyrighted or Licensed Material

Written permission must be obtained from the copyright holder and kept on file, whenever necessary, for the use of any and all copyrighted materials not belonging to Howard University or to a faculty member utilizing his/her own material. Copyright permission may be necessary not only for text but in some instances also for photographs, graphics, audio, video, compiled statistics, graphs and Web Site elements.

However, copyrighted materials that are in the public domain or that may be used within "fair use" guidelines may be displayed as permitted. Appropriate copyright notices must be prominently displayed as necessary and access to such materials must be limited as required by the conditions of the license for use obtained from the copyright owner.

VII. Specific Requirements and Responsibilities

1. Main Howard University Web Site

The Main Howard University Web Site is primarily a portal to General Howard University Web sites. It also contains information that is not specific to any General Howard University Web site (e.g. A university contact page, a university calendar, etc). Having a Web Site hosted on a Web Server does not guarantee a link from the Main Howard University Web Site.

2. Home Page for the Main Howard University Web Site

The Home Page for the Main Howard University Web Site at <http://www.howard.edu/> is the official gateway to the Howard University Web Sites. It is responsible for directing visitors to general categories or user-group pages. Examples of general categories are "Enrollment", "News & Events" and "Calendars". Examples of user-group pages are "Current Students" and "Faculty". The Home Page may also link to Web Pages that offer a service or guide to any visitor, such as "Welcome Center" or "Search Howard" links.

The Home Page contains only content and links that have the highest importance and value to visitors. The Home Page for the Main Howard University Web Site is not required to linking to specific Web Pages, such as a department home page.

Requested changes to the layout or content of the Home Page are reviewed by the University Webmaster(s) and University Communications.

3. Main Howard University Webmaster(s)

The Main Howard University Webmaster(s) oversees the design, structure and development of the Main Howard University Web Site and ensures the policies of Howard University are followed to keep consistent graphic design, writing style and accuracy of official information.

4. Main Howard University Web Server(s)

The primary responsibility of the Main Howard University Web Server(s) is to host the Static and Dynamic Web Pages of the Main Howard University Web Site. It may also host databases used by the Main Howard University Web Site.

The secondary responsibility of the Main Howard University Web Server(s) is to host the Static Web Pages of General Howard University Web Sites. The Main Howard University Webmaster(s) have the right to determine if Dynamic Web Pages and databases will be hosted for General Howard University Web Sites.

5. General Howard University Web Sites

General Howard University Web Sites must conform to the following policies:

- Policy for General Howard University Web Sites at <http://www.howard.edu/web/policy/officialwebsite.htm>
- Policy for Policy for Data Collection on Official Howard University Web Sites at <http://www.howard.edu/web/policy/datacollection.htm>

General Howard University Web Sites are recognized by the University and are registered in the Howard University Web Community Database at <http://www.howard.edu/web/wcd/>.

6. General Howard University Web Publishers

General Howard University Web Publishers produce, review, update, and/or remove content from General Howard University Web Sites. These tasks may be assigned to one person, or may be split between people. An example is to have one person produce and review content, and then submit it to another person who actually updates and removes the content from the Web Site.

General Howard University Web Publishers are responsible for making sure all content is up-to-date and accurate on their respective General Howard University Web Site.

General Howard University Web Publishers are recognized by the University and are registered in the Howard University Web Community Database at <http://www.howard.edu/web/wcd/>.

7. General Howard University Server Administrators and Web Servers

General Howard University Server Administrators setup, maintain and upgrade General Howard University Web Servers. General Howard University Server Administrators are responsible for assuring that at least following is met by Web Servers they maintain:

- Maintaining a web site uptime of at least 99.98% (Maximum of 175.2 hours downtime per year).
- Following all relevant Howard University security and server management policies including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Information Sensitivity Policy
 - Password Policy
 - Server Security Policy

General Howard University Web Servers must conform to the Policy for General Howard University Web Servers at <http://www.howard.edu/web/policy/officialwebserver.htm>.

General Howard University Server Administrators and Web Servers are recognized by the University and are registered in the Howard University Web Community Database at <http://www.howard.edu/web/wcd/>.

8. Unofficial Web Information, Web Sites, Web Publishers, Web Servers and Web Server Administrators

Howard University is not responsible for Unofficial Web Information, Unofficial Web Sites, Unofficial Web Publishers, Unofficial Web Servers and Unofficial Web Server Administrators. The University reserves the right, however, to remove any Web Information, Web Site or Web Server or any computer or file on the Howard University network that is found to be in violation of the federal, state, or copyright law, Howard University's policies and interests, or that is detrimental to the performance of the Main Howard University Web Server or to the network.

Unofficial Web Sites may under no circumstances use any logos that would identify them directly with the Howard University, unless specific permission is granted by the Web Oversight Committee.

VIII. Revisions

- Revised by Main Howard University Webmaster(s) - November, 2004
- Revised by Main Howard University Webmaster(s) - August, 2004
- Revised by Main Howard University Webmaster(s) - May 10th, 2003
- Original - September 24th, 2001

IX. Appeals

Appeals regarding any of the guidelines in this policy may be made to the Main Howard University Webmaster(s) at webmaster@howard.edu or to the Office of University Communications at ouc@howard.edu.

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