# Content Management Guidelines for www.savannahstate.edu

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for managing Savannah State University’s public website [http://www.savannahstate.edu](http://www.savannahstate.edu/). This is an effort to standardize the decision making process for content production and publication. The guidelines detailed herein should be reviewed on a regular basis. The review is to ensure that the guidelines meet the current needs of Savannah State University, and that it represents contemporary best practices for web design and development.

These guidelines apply to all individuals who are responsible for managing content on Savannah State University’s public website [http://www.savannahstate.edu](http://www.savannahstate.edu/).

Please refer to the list of definitions located at the end of this document for more information on terms. If you have any questions please contact the Division of University Advancement.

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## Savannahstate.edu Web Content Management Guidelines

The following guidelines aim to define a rule set for website content editors to follow when working on content for the website.

### General

* The Division of University Advancement will help departments identify website content managers and website content editors.
* Website content managers should approve all content changes made to their webpages before they are published.
* Only publish content for one of the following purposes:
  + Education
  + Research
  + Recruitment
  + Services for university students, faculty, or staff
  + Promotion of the university
* Review all of the content you are responsible for at least once a year.
* Remove old, underutilized, and non-critical content. The Division of University Advancement can provide a report that details how many page views each webpage receives.
* Always consider the intended audience when creating or publishing content.
* Hyperlinks to external websites must not imply Savannah State University’s endorsement of any individual, organization, product, service, or political entity unless approved by the Division of University Advancement.
* Consult the Division of University Advancement before using items such as the university’s seal and logo.
* Savannah State University’s public website <http://www.savannahstate.edu>, may be subject to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and other non-discrimination policies. Strive to make all content available to individuals with disabilities, either directly or through alternative means.
* Do not create personal webpages for yourself or for others.
* Take into consideration that visitors will be viewing your content on many different devices. The Division of University Advancement can help you create content that is optimized for a variety of devices.

### Security

Cybercriminals can attack vulnerabilities in unsecured software or through compromised credentials. Cyber attacks may cause Savannah State University serious financial hardship, legal issues, and/or damage to its reputation.

* Please report any suspicious web activity to the Division of University Advancement or Computer Services and Information Technology immediately. This includes, but is not limited to, the website being unavailable, strange items appearing on a webpage, unexpected redirects to other sites, or error messages.
* Do not share your login information with others. This is a security risk that can impact the entire website, as well as your personal information. Contact the Division of University Advancement if someone else needs access to manage your content.
* Please let the Division of University Advancement know when an individual no longer needs access to manage content. Limiting access helps to strengthen security.
* Don’t upload scripts, applications, or files that aren’t from a trusted source. Always err on the side of caution. Ask the Division of University Advancement to review it if you are unsure.

### High-Value Pages

The Division of University Advancement will identify high-value pages on an ongoing basis. These are pages that either receive a lot of traffic or are critically important to a university initiative. The Division of University Advancement will take sole responsibility for managing the content of high-value pages. This is necessary to provide coordinated messaging and consistent visuals across key areas of the website. If the Division of University Advancement takes over a page, it is not necessarily because the website content editor is ineffective.

### Copy

* All copy must accurately reflect the university, its students, faculty, staff, and/or affiliates.
* Use clear and concise language to convey your message.
* Fact check and spell check copy before it is published to the website.
* Make sure you have legal permission to use all copy you publish to the website. Always ask for the author’s written permission before you publish their material on the website.
* Provide hyperlinks or references to any source material used to create copy.
* Use official names for people, places, and things. For example, use “Theodore A. Wright Stadium” instead of “the stadium.”
* Never publish personal information about faculty, staff or students. This includes, but is not limited to, home addresses, personal phone numbers, personal email addresses, and social security numbers.
* Add a disclaimer to hyperlinks that link to external websites. This should state that this link does not imply an endorsement from Savannah State University.
* Hyperlinks that link to an external website should always open in a new browser window. This can be achieved by using the target blank attribute of the anchor tag. For example <a href=”http://www.whitehouse.gov” target=”\_blank”>The White House</a> will open a new browser window that displays the US President’s website.
* When appropriate, try to edit content down to bullet points.

### Styling

* The font size, color, and line spacing should be applied automatically when you create a webpage. In most cases, it is not recommended that you change these properties.
* If you are copying text from another source like a word document, pdf, email, or another webpage, make sure to remove its formatting.
* Do not add underlines to your copy because it can confuse the visitor into thinking the text is a hyperlink.
* Headings should be designated by HTML header tags. For example **<h1>this is a heading</h1>**. Only use the <h1> tag once for the page title. You can use multiple <h2> through <h6> tags within the same page to define headings of various importance.
* Tables should only be used to display information in a grid. For example, a list of departments with their corresponding chair and phone number would look something like

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Department Name** | **Chair Person** | **Phone Number** |
| Physics | Dr. John Doe | 555-123-4567 |
| English | Dr. Jane Doe | 555-234-5678 |

* Please review the style parameters section and contact the Division of University Advancement if you have any questions about appropriate copy styling.

### Multimedia (Images, Videos, Sounds/Songs, and Animation)

* Make sure you have legal permission to use any images, videos, sounds/songs, or animations that you publish to the website. Always ask the copyright holder for written permission before you publish it to the website.
* Images, videos, sounds/songs, or animations should not violate any university policy, local, state, or federal law at the time of posting.
* Use multimedia elements sparingly. As a general rule-of-thumb, don’t add more than one per webpage.
* The quality of a multimedia element should be consistent with other examples on the website. Always use professionally produced or professional-quality items.
* Multimedia elements should be no wider than 535px.
* Image file size should be less than 1 MB.
* Videos should be hosted on an external service like YouTube or Vimeo. If Savannah State University is the copyright holder of the video, please ask the Division of University Advancement to upload it to an official Savannah State University video channel.
* Refrain from using clip art, emoticons, or any cartoonish imagery. Please contact the Division of University Advancement if you need assistance with the selection or creation of imagery.
* Refrain from using the auto play feature of audio and video. Always provide the visitor with clearly labeled controls for audio and video playback.
* Add a description of an image’s content using the alt tag. For example <img src=” <http://www.savannahstate.edu/source/ssu_logo.png>” alt=”Full-color version of Savannah State University’s official school logo”/>. This helps make the webpage more accessible to visitors with disabilities. It also helps search engines find the image.
* Make sure the file name of the multimedia element is descriptive. For example, use “2014-spring-graduation.jpg” instead of “graduation.jpg.” This helps search engines find it.
* Refrain from using animated gifs unless they are absolutely necessary.

### Documents (Word Documents, Spreadsheets, PDFs, and Slideshows)

* Make sure the file size for these documents is as small as possible. Contact the Division of University Advancement for assistance with optimization.

### Functionality

* Please have the Division of University Advancement review any special functionality you wish to use before you publish it. This is to ensure that malicious code doesn’t get onto our network or servers.

### Layout

* The Division of University Advancement is responsible for determining the overall layout of the website.
* Input may be solicited from website content managers, website content editors, and external sources to produce new layouts.
* Major layout changes will be communicated prior to implementation.
* The layout will adhere to contemporary design standards and best practices.
* Website content managers and website content editors should refrain from creating or adopting their own layouts.

## Savannahstate.edu Homepage Content Management Guidelines

The following guidelines aim to define a rule set for the Division of University Advancement to follow when considering updates to the homepage. The homepage content is managed and maintained by the Division of University Advancement.

### Images and Videos

* Images should have a minimum width of 960px and a minimum height of 640px to be considered for the slideshow. The image can be larger than these dimensions, as long as it maintains a 1.5 aspect ratio. For example1880px by 1280px.
* No image or video should have a width greater than 1920px. Most visitors will not see the entire image at full resolution because the template only allows for a maximum width of 960px. Also based on current national and [www.savannahstate.edu](http://www.savannahstate.edu/) specific web statistics, 1920px by 1080px is the highest screen resolution of significance.
* The file size of an image should be no greater than 1 MB. This will ensure faster loading of the webpage.
* JPG and PNG will be the only file formats used for photos because of their ability to reproduce fine detail. GIF and PNG file formats should be used for icons and user interface (UI) elements because of their ability to render transparency.
* To be considered for the slideshow, the major visual components of the image should not interfere with the main navigation, sub navigation or slideshow controls.
* Videos will be uploaded to external video hosting services like YouTube or Vimeo. This reduces Savannah State University’s bandwidth usage, standardizes the controls, and makes the content discoverable to a wider audience.
* Students, faculty, and staff can submit photography to be used on the website.
* Submission Requirements
* Photos should be high quality.
* The file size should be less than 2 MB.
* Image width should be between 535px and 1920px.
* If the photo is for the slideshow, the submitter must provide a caption and a URL that contains more information. Alternatively they may submit a word document that details the significance of the photo.
* The submitter must confirm that they have legal permission to use the photo.
* The Division of University Advancement will decide if the photo is appropriate for the site, how it is used, and when it will be used.
* The Division of University Advancement can suspend the photography submission program at anytime without prior notice.

### Publication Schedule

* Content will be published each Monday and Thursday. If Monday or Thursday falls on a holiday, the content will be published on the last business day prior to the holiday.
* Content can be published at any time if it is deemed an emergency.
* All content must have a defined publication and removal date. If content is not time-sensitive it should be replaced two weeks after its publication.
* University Advancement has the right and responsibility to refuse production or publication of content that doesn’t meet the standards outlined in this document.

### Homepage content should feature

* Text, images, and videos that accurately and positively reflect the university, its students, faculty, staff, and/or affiliates.
* Text, images, or videos that provide current information about:
* Student recruitment efforts
* Major university events
* Major accomplishments of the university, its students, faculty, staff, and/or affiliates.
* Major university initiatives
* Campus-wide warnings, alerts, or emergencies
* A self-contained message that is easily and quickly understandable.
* Actionable language and/or design elements. For example, a link labeled “Click Here to Learn More” or a play button.
* High quality copy, design, imagery, and/or videos.

### Homepage content should NOT feature

* Text, images, or videos that violate any university policy at the time of posting.
* Text, images, or videos that violate any local, state, or federal law at the time of posting.
* Text, images, or videos that have no direct connection to the university. Though subject to interpretation, the Division of University Advancement will always err on the side of caution. Each exception may have unintended ramifications.
* Text, images, or videos that target a small portion of our audience.
* Advertisement or links to sites that are not directly associated with the university.

### Layout

* University Advancement is responsible for determining the overall layout of the homepage and for the production and publication of content.
* The layout will adhere to contemporary design standards and best practices.
* Major layout changes will be supported by research and current analytical data.
* If a slideshow is used, it will have less than 5 slides.
* If a slideshow is used, all slides in the slideshow must contain a title and description with a call-to-action like “click here”

## Savannahstate.edu Style Parameters

The following section defines a small subset of standards and measurements used on the website.

### Official School Colors

Orange - #f79239; RGB 247, 146, 57

Blue - #0053a0; RGB 0, 83, 160

### Template Dimensions

Homepage

Main Content Area

Desktop

Width: 960px

Height: Variable

Tablet

Width: greater than 650px and less than 959px

Height: Variable

Smartphone

Width: less than or equal to 649px

Height: Variable

Interior Pages

Main Content Area – area between the two white vertical menus

Desktop

Width: 535px

Height: Variable

Tablet

Width: greater than 650px and less than 959px

Height: Variable

Smartphone

Width: less than or equal to 649px

Height: Variable

### Font Properties

Desktop

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Font | Font Size | Font Color | Line Spacing | Other |
| Default | Montserrat | 15px | #303030 | 1.6 |  |
| Headings – Page Title | Montserrat | 1.875em | #00539a | 1 | Bold |
| Body | Montserrat | .9em | #303030 | 1.6 |  |
| Links | Montserrat | .9em | #00539a | 1.6 | Underlined |

Tablet

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Font | Font Size | Font Color | Line Spacing | Other |
| Default | Montserrat | 15px | #303030 | 1.6 |  |
| Headings – Page Title | Montserrat | 1.5em | #303030 | 1 | Bold |
| Body | Montserrat | 1em | #303030 | 1 |  |
| Links | Montserrat | 1em | #00539a | 1 | Underlined |

Smartphone

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Font | Font Size | Font Color | Line Spacing | Other |
| Default | Montserrat | 18px | #303030 | 1 |  |
| Headings – Page Title | Montserrat | 1.5em | #303030 | 1 | Bold |
| Body | Montserrat | 1em | #303030 | 1 |  |
| Links | Montserrat | 1em | #00539a | 1 | Underlined |

## Definitions

**Audience**

Audiences that should be directly targeted

* Prospective Students
* Current Students
* Faculty / Staff
* Donors
* Alumni

Your intended audience may understand the context of your ideas, but others may not. Please be conscious of the fact that your content is available to everyone with Internet access.

**Visitor** – For the purposes of this document, a visitor is any individual that accesses our web site. And based on the website statistics, there is a 42% chance that this person is a current student, faculty or staff member.

**Template** – Refers to the site’s standard logo, header, footer, and navigation. These elements are the same from page to page. Within a template there is an empty space for website content editors to place their content.

**Content** – Refers to the “contents” of the page. These are the unique text and multimedia elements that fill the blank space in the template.

**High Quality** – High quality is synonymous with professional-quality. Always use the best available content. Images and videos should demonstrate a deliberate attention to lighting, angle, setting, and overall composition. Copy should be clear, concise and free of spelling, and grammatical errors.

**Screen Resolution** – Horizontal and vertical lines measure resolution. 1920 x 1080 means there are 1920 vertical columns and 1080 horizontal rows. Higher numbers mean sharper images.

**PX (Pixel)** – A pixel is essentially a single dot on a device’s screen. When a horizontal line of resolution and vertical line of resolution intersect it is called a pixel. Pixel is a standard unit of measurement in web design.

**Aspect Ratio** – Aspect ratio refers to screens, images, or videos. It is the width divided by the height. This measurement is independent of size. If you doubled the height and width, you would increase the size, but maintain the aspect ratio.

**The Fold** – A term borrowed from newspaper layout, this refers to the top portion of the front page when the newspaper is “folded” in half. This is usually the most important, interesting, and/or eye-catching content. This is the cover story that is used to sell newspapers. In web design terms, it refers to what a visitor will see when they load a web page. Content “above the fold” is extremely important on the homepage because the vast majority of visitors will start there.

**Hyperlink** – Sometimes simply referred to as a “link,” is clickable text that navigates to another webpage, document, or website. Hyperlinks are usually underlined and colored differently to make them stand out.

**Website** – Sometimes simply referred to as a “site,” is a collection of related webpages managed under a single domain. <http://www.savannahstate.edu> is Savannah State University’s website.

**Webpage** – Sometimes simply referred to as a “page.” For the purposes of this document, a webpage is a file that contains content intended to be accessible from the Internet. For example, at <http://www.savannahstate.edu/prospective-student/grad.shtml> “grad.shtml” is the webpage.

**Navigation** – A menu of hyperlinks that help the visitor navigate to different sections of the website. In general, the navigation is located towards the top of a webpage. It is usually a row of text or buttons that remains the same even when you navigate to another webpage within the same website.

**URL** – Stands for uniform resource locator and is also known as a web address. It is what you type into the address bar of a web browser to access a particular webpage. <http://www.savannahstate.edu/prospective-student/grad.shtml> is the URL for the Graduate Admissions webpage.

**Domain** – Sometimes called a domain name, is a unique name that identifies a particular website. savannahstate.edu is Savannah State University’s domain.

**Internal vs. External** - An internal webpage or website is one controlled by Savannah State University. These are usually on the savannahstate.edu domain. An external webpage or website is not controlled by Savannah State University. Google, Facebook, and Amazon are examples of external websites.

**Functionality (Scripts/Code)** – These terms refer to sets of instructions that perform a task. For example, when a visitor fills out an online form, a script will validate that all of the required information was entered. When the form is submitted, there is code that will save the information into a database and email an administrator.

**Application** – An application or program is a collection of related functionality. For example, Microsoft Word is an application that contains many different pieces of functionality like spell-check or making text bold. Gmail is also an application.

**Website Content Managers** – An individual that is responsible for managing the tasks associated with keeping a set of webpages up-to-date. This includes helping to identify individuals to fill the website content editor role, approving content updates, and making content updates if needed.

**Website Content Editors** – An individual tasked with updating a particular set of webpages on a website. Website content editors should submit updates to website content managers for approval before publishing.